

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 OPIC-03 EB-07 AGRE-00 IGA-02
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01 INR-07
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7412
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: EWWT, EAID, EG
SUBJ: PL 480 PROBLEMS AT ALEXANDRIA PORT AND PORT SAID

REF (A) ALEXANDRIA 616, (B) ALEXANDRIA 627, (C) CAIRO 11749,

1. WE HAVE THREE PROBLEMS WITH RESPECT TO PL 480 SHIPMENTS
ARRIVING AT ALEXANDRIA PORT OR PORT SAID: FIRST, BERTHING
PRECEDENCE FOR VESSELS FREIGHTING SUCH CARGOES; SECOND,
EXPEDITIOUS OFFLOADING; THIRD, EXPEDITIOUS REMOVAL FROM
PIER AREAS TO AVOID PIER CONGESTION AND COMMODITY LOS.
PROBLEMS SLIGHT DIFFERENT IN ALEXANDRIA AND PORT SAID.
ALEXANDRIA PORT HAS BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO HANDLING PL 480
CARGOES, WHILE PORT SAID IS JUST HANDLING ITS FIRST VESSEL.

A. ALEXANDRIA PORT
(1) RE REF F, OUR LONGSTANDING AGREEMENT WITH GOE (MINTRADE
AND ALEXANDRIA PORT) IS THAT PL 480) VESSELS WILL BE GIVEN
PRIORITY DOCKING AND OFFLOADING. CONGEN SHOULD DO UTMOST TO
ENSURE THAT PORT AUTHORITIES HONOR THIS UNDERSTANDING. IF
THEY FAIL TO DO SO, PLEASE ADVISE AND WILL WEEK MINSUPPLY
INTERVENTION. PROBLEM IS, OF COURSE, THAT IN THIS SOMEWHAT
CHAOTIC GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE, MINSUPPLY'S CLOUT IS NOT
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ALWAYS WHAT WE WISH IT WERE. IF MINSUPPLY UNABLE CORRECT
SITUATION EXPEDITIOUSLY, WE WILL GO TO HIGHER AUTHORITY. UN-
LESS THERE ARE OVERRIDING SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS, CONCUR
WE SHOULD NORMALLY RESPECT PORT AUTHORITIES' STANDARD PRI-
ORITIES WITHIN CONTEXT OF PL 480 CARGO PREFERENCE.

(2) FOLLOWING RECEIPT REF A, WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH MIN

SUPPLY, WHICH ASSURED US IT DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE REMOVE "MOUNTAIN OF WHEAT". PROBLEM WAS SHORTAGE OF MINTRANS-PORT TRUCKS, BUT MINSUPPLY PRESSING FOR MORE TRUCKS. IN ADDITION CONGEN INSPECTIONS, WE HAVE ASKED REP OF DE LAUREAL COMPANY, WHO IS PORT OPERATION EXPERT, TO LOOK INTO SITUATION. HE DID SO AND REPORTS OFFLOADING, BAGGING AND MOVING WHEAT IS NOW "NORMAL" AND CAUSING NO PROBELMS OR CONGESTION IN PORT. ONLY STOCKPILING IS IN BASIN AREA WHICH DOES NOT BLOCK ANYTHING ELSE. IT IS ESTIMATED AT 8,000 TONS, WHICH SHOULD BE REMOVED NEXT THREE OR FOUR DAYS. AT BASIN, INCIDENTIALLY, SMALL TRUCKS CAN MOVE IN AND OUT AND THERE IS AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF TRUCKS. OFFLOADING AND TRUCKING ACTIVITY NOW ABOUT TWO-THIRDS WHAT IT WAS A WEEK AGO WITH ABOUT ONEHALF OF BARGES OPERATING. ACCORDING DE LAUREAL REP, AT HEIGHT OF PROBLEM LAST WEEK, MOVEMENT FROM DOCKS BY TRUCKS WAS AT THE MAXIMUM WHICH COULD BE HANDLED. TRUCKS WERE WAITING IN LINE THREE BLOCKS LONG AND ANY MORE TRUCKS WOULD HAVE CAUSED CONGESTION.

B. PORT SAID

RE PORT SAID OPERATION, AID OFFICER VISITED THERE JULY 16 AND OBSERVED OFFLOADING AND TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS, IN DISCUSSION WITH BRUER, IT DEVELOPED THERE CONTINUES BE SEVERE LACK OF TRANSPORT FOR WHEAT WHICH IS BEING OFFLOADED. RESULT HAS BEEN AN ACCUMULATION ON QUAY OF ROUGHLY 16,000 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MT OF PL 480 WHEAT UNBAGGED. BRUER HAS HAD TO SLOW DOWN HIS OFFLOADING OPERATIONS TO 2,500 MT PER DAY, MINIMUM ALLOWED UNDER HIS CONTRACT, BUT WILL SOON HAVE TO STOP OPERATIONS ALTOGETHER UNLESS SOME ADDITIONAL TRANSPORT IS PROVIDED SOONEST CARRY AWAY GRAIN. BRUER ESTIMATES HE CAN PROBABLY FINISH DISCHARGING VESSEL CURRENTLY IN PORT (ABOUT 12,000 MT), BUT WILL BE UNABLE PROCEED WITH DISCHARGING NEXT VESSEL DUE IN THREE OR FOUR DAYS. WERE SUFFICIENT TRANSPORT AVAILABLE, HE WOULD BE ABLE TO SPEED UP OFFLOADING OPERATION TO 4,000 MT A DAY. BRUER HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY SEVERAL PRIVATE TRUCKING FIRMS WHO WILLING ASSIST AND WE UNDERSAND MINSUPPLY HAS INDICATED WILLINGNESS RECEIVE PROPOSALS FROM PROVATE SECTOR COMPANIES.

2. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT LOSS FACTOR IN PORT SAID MAY, UNDER EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES, BE HIGH. THERE IS WHEAT ALL OVER THE GROUND TO A MUCH GREATER EXTENT THAN USUAL DUE TO EXCESSIVELY LARGE MOUNTAIN OF GRAIN THAT HAS ACCUMULATED. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE CEMENT SWEEPINGS MIXED IN WITH THE WHEAT SINCE CEMENT IS APPARENTLY OFFLOADED AT THE SAME QUAY. AMB HAS ASKED ALUSNA, WHO IS VISITING PORT SAID TODAY, TO GIVE SUCH HELP AS HE CAN IN URGING LOCAL AUTHORITIES COOPERATE.

WE ARE ALSO AGAIN MAKING REPRESENTATIONS TO MINSUPPLY
ZAKARIYA TAWFIQ TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TRUCKS, BE THEY MIN
TRANSPORT OR PRIVATE TRUCKS AND TO ARRANGE THAT OFFLOADING
OF CEMENT NOT TAKE PLACE THE SAME QUAY. UNFORTUNATELY, HIS
CONTROL OVER PORT SAID OPERATION LIMITED, BUT RESPONSIBILITY
ENSURE EXPEDITIOUS DISCHARGE IS HIS AND WE WILL HOLD HIS
FEET TO FIRE.
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